

During the last few weeks, the Washington Office (WO) of the Forest Service has been working on the national VIPR solicitation schedule in light of their direction to extend the 2016 awards to assure resource coverage in the 2019 fire season. The WO has decided that the national VIPR solicitation schedule will NOT be changed due to the long term ramifications that would create in the years to come. Subsequently the WO has issued direction to all Regions to solicit the originally scheduled 2019 resources and process awards sometime during the calendar year of 2019.

After considering the pros and cons of either a spring solicitation or a fall solicitation, Region 1 has decided a spring solicitation is best considering historical potential for fall fires in the Northern Rockies. We anticipate posting the 2019 solicitations for Engines, Support Water Tenders, Pumper Cats, Softracks, and Skidgines during the week of March 25 with an anticipated close date of April 24. Inspections will be due Monday, May 13 at 16:30. Due to the accelerated time frames there will be no grace period extended to submit inspections. The Contracting Officer must have in their possession on May 13 by 16:30 a completed inspection per resource offered to be considered for a 2019 award. As in the past, inspections may be mailed, emailed or hand-delivered; FAXed inspections will not be accepted.

Evaluations, negotiations, and awards are anticipated to be completed by late June at which time the 2016 awards will be expired and the 2019 awards posted.

As with all plans, there must be a contingency; at no time is there to be a break in coverage for potential fire activity. The 2016 awards are currently extended through December of 2019 and will remain in place until any subsequent awards are finished. In the event we are not successful in accomplishing the new awards on this accelerated time schedule we will continue to use the extended 2016 awards.

Also, due to the nature of the decision process following the Government shutdown, it is understood that inspections may be an issue. Region 1 opened inspections for the new solicitation in September of 2018; solicitation inspections dated on or after that date will be accepted for award consideration purposes. If a vendor is able to make a timely offer in VIPR but misses the deadline for inspection submittals; late inspection submittals will be accepted but award consideration will happen during the 2020 Rollover timeframe where all vendors have an opportunity to adjust their price.

We understand – and in many ways share your frustration in this process. Having said that, we are relieved that a decision has been made and are ready to get down to the business of getting ready for this next fire season.

Thank you for your patience, Debby



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Northern Rockies Fire Contracting Information: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/fire/nrcg/>

VIPR Helpdesk: 1-866-224-7677

VIPR Vendor Application: <http://www.fs.fed.us/business/incident/vendorapp.php>